

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 1270

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, this week the Committee on Resources will mark up H.R. 1270, the Nuclear Waste Act of 1997. This bill tramples the Constitution and violates the basic fundamentals this great country was founded upon.

Whatever happened to States rights? Whatever happened to the tenth amendment? How can this body mandate upon the State of Nevada that it must accept nuclear industry waste when Nevada does not even have a nuclear power plant of its own?

What about private property rights? In New Mexico a man won a lawsuit which entitled him to \$884,000 because nuclear waste was shipped next to his private property and devalued his land. Again, this garbage will travel through 43 States along the most heavily populated highways in this country. Guess who is going to pay off all these private property owners? The American taxpayer.

H.R. 1270 is an unfunded mandate, a tax increase, a dangerous idea and a very bad policy. Do not be misled by the nuclear industry lobby. Get the facts. Vote "no" on 1270.

ALLOWING SMOKING IN THE CHAMBER

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, our decision to allow smoking in this Chamber, the Speaker's lobby and the cloakrooms impacts not just ourselves but hundreds of employees, many of whom are here on a regular basis. Reports from our employees that I have received indicate they suffer extreme discomfort in some cases, do not like it, but feel uncomfortable about speaking out.

We should care as much for our employees as for other Federal workers who do get a smoke-free environment. They deserve it. Executive Order 13058 protects employees of Federal agencies from tobacco in the workplace. Agencies must implement the smoking ban by August 9, 1998.

There has been much talk in this Chamber about playing by the same rules as everybody else. Unfortunately, there is rather a glaring gap between the rhetoric and action when it comes to providing a smoke-free workplace for our employees.

It is time for the House to catch up with the rest of America and move to protect the health of our employees. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 247.

WHITE HOUSE REACTION TO IRS

(Mr. HUTCHINSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Madam Speaker, now the whole world knows what American taxpayers suspected for many years: While there are many good employees, the IRS as an organization is running amok, abusing its power, targeting citizens, and acting on a daily basis to run the word "service" straight out of town.

So what is the Clinton administration's reaction to this abuse after it comes to light? Denounce the abuses? Promise never to use the IRS for political purposes again? And here is a dream, take those responsible for the abuse and hold them accountable? Guess again. The White House instinctively reacts the way it does whenever any government bureaucracy comes under attack. It defends the IRS.

The IRS needs an overhaul. We should sunset the Internal Revenue Code and have a national debate on the direction of our tax system. It needs a breath of fresh air and acknowledgment that it needs to go in a new direction. That is what this debate would be about, if we sunset the Internal Revenue Code.

RENO PROTECTING WHITE HOUSE

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, is it any wonder that the day after the Attorney General makes a supposedly impartial preliminary decision last Friday clearing President Clinton of criminal conduct, that the White House suddenly releases videotapes of fundraisers at the White House? It is no coincidence that these videotapes were released to congressional investigators and the Justice Department after the Attorney General's decision. Senate investigators had previously asked if these tapes existed. The White House said no, they did not even exist.

Also, Madam Speaker, who is to also believe that somehow a 60-second portion of audio is missing from the tape of a June 18, 1996, fund-raising coffee at which witnesses recall John Huang asking for campaign contributions in the presence of the President?

Madam Speaker, I think it is important that we go forward and call for a special independent prosecutor, to find out what is occurring here.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that she will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules but not before 5 p.m. today.

VETERANS HEALTH PROGRAMS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1997

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2206) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs for homeless veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2206

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Health Programs Improvement Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FOR SERIOUSLY MENTALLY ILL AND HOMELESS VETERANS.

(a) CODIFICATION AND REVISIONS OF VETERANS HOMELESS PROGRAMS.—Chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subchapter:

"SUBCHAPTER VII—TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FOR SERIOUSLY MENTALLY ILL AND HOMELESS VETERANS

"§ 1771. General treatment

"In providing care and services under section 1710 of this title to veterans suffering from serious mental illness, including veterans who are homeless, the Secretary may provide (directly or in conjunction with a governmental or other entity)—

"(1) outreach services;

"(2) care, treatment, and rehabilitative services (directly or by contract in community-based treatment facilities, including halfway houses); and

"(3) therapeutic transitional housing assistance under section 1772 of this title, in conjunction with work therapy under section 1718(a) or (b) of this title and outpatient care.

"§ 1772. Therapeutic housing

"(a) The Secretary, in connection with the conduct of compensated work therapy programs, may operate residences and facilities as therapeutic housing.

"(b) The Secretary may use such procurement procedures for the purchase, lease, or other acquisition of residential housing for purposes of this section as the Secretary considers appropriate to expedite the opening and operation of transitional housing and to protect the interests of the United States.

"(c) A residence or other facility may be operated as transitional housing for veterans described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1710(a) of this title under the following conditions:

"(1) Only veterans described in those paragraphs and a house manager may reside in the residence.

"(2) Each resident, other than the house manager, shall be required to make payments that contribute to covering the expenses of board and the operational costs of the residence for the period of residence in such housing.

"(3) In order to foster the therapeutic and rehabilitative objectives of such housing (A) residents shall be prohibited from using alcohol or any controlled substance or item, (B) any resident violating that prohibition may be expelled from the residence, and (C) each resident shall agree to undergo drug testing or such other measures as the Secretary shall prescribe to ensure compliance with that prohibition.

"(4) In the establishment and operation of housing under this section, the Secretary